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SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS  
COMMUNICATIONS

# NEWS

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Eliminate Standing Water and Reduce Mosquito Breeding/West Nile Virus**

(Sedgwick County, Kansas) – In April, Sedgwick County received over four inches of rain, and since May 1, Sedgwick County has already received almost two inches of water. Even though that is below the normal average, heavy amounts of rainfall can lead to standing water. The Sedgwick County Health Department would like to remind you that standing water this time of year could be a breeding ground for mosquitoes and for West Nile Virus.

West Nile Virus, which is spread through the bite of a mosquito, was confirmed in Sedgwick County last summer and is predicted to be here to stay, much like lyme disease. However, there are several steps you can take to reduce mosquito breeding and avoid mosquito bites. Both of which will help reduce your chances of being bitten by an infected mosquito. (See attached).

### **Reduce Mosquito Breeding:**

Eliminating standing water in your yard will reduce mosquito breeding.

This could include water in old tires, flower pots, abandoned swimming pools, folded tarps, bird baths and non-flowing water gardens and many other items which hold water for a few days.

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Treat water in ponds and water gardens.

Add larva-eating minnows (such as shiners or tuffies) from a bait shop.

Safe products are available which will not harm pets, ornamental fish or plants.

**Avoid Mosquito Bites:**

Consider staying indoors during peak mosquito biting times – dawn, dusk and early evening.

Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors.

Apply insect repellent containing DEET to clothing and sparingly to exposed skin (avoid applying repellent to hands of children, it may be irritating.)

"Just taking a few steps can help reduce your chances of getting West Nile Virus," said Commission Chairman Tim Norton. "We all have a responsibility to make sure we eliminate standing water so we can control the mosquito population."

For more information on West Nile Virus, contact the Sedgwick County Health Department at 660-7392.

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